

**LEON VALLEY PARK COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 15, 2013**

The Leon Valley Park Commission met on the 15th day of August, 2013 at 7 p.m. at the Leon Valley City Council Chambers, at 6400 El Verde Road, Leon Valley, Texas, for the purpose of the following business, to-wit:

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE LEON VALLEY PARK COMMISSION
AUGUST 15, 2013, 7:00 PM**

1. Call the Leon Valley Park Commission Meeting to Order and Determine a Quorum is Present.

Chairman Bert Thomas called the Regular Park Commission meeting to order. Present were Chairman Bert Thomas and Commissioners Scott Baird, Linda Tarin, Tom Fraser, and Rachel Felkner. Also present was City Staff member Melinda Smith. Absent and excused were Commissioners Benay Cacciatore, Susan Fraser, and Bill Cooper. Absent and excused was Commissioner John Stanley. Let the record show that a quorum was present.

Chairman Thomas stated that he thought the Park Commission needed a parliamentarian and that he had asked Commissioner Baird to take that position and it was accepted. A decision was made to move Item #5 on the Agenda to Item #2.

2. Discuss:

A. Rules for conducting Leon Valley Park Commission meetings

Commissioner Baird addressed the Commission, stating that he had reviewed the City Council meeting rules and he suggested the Park Commission adopt Rule Numbers 7, 8, 9, and 11, and to renumber them as Rule 1, 2, 3, and 4. He suggested that in Rule Number 7, "Public Hearing" be changed to read "Citizens to be Heard", that in Rule Number 8, the words "Councilmember" be changed to "Commissioner", that in Rule Number 9, the word "Councilmember" be changed to "Commissioner" and "Mayor" be changed to "Chairman", and that the requirement for agenda items being received by the Chair by noon be stricken from the rule, and finally that in Rule Number 11, the word "Councilmember" be changed to "Commissioner". He further suggested that Robert's Rules of Conduct would govern all other matters not covered by the adopted rules. Commissioner Baird made a motion to adopt the specific rules as revised, and Commissioner Falkner seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Baird then stated that he had emailed a copy Robert's Rules of Order Simplified version to each of the Commissioners. He further explained that the formal Roberts Rules of Order were too cumbersome and not necessary for the Park Commission purpose, but that he had a simplified version that was more suitable. He noted that the Chairman would set the agenda, but that another member of the Commission needed to concur with the subject matter listed in the agenda, and that the guiding principal was that

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all Commissioners had a right to know what is going on at all times during the meetings. He noted that all Commissioners had a right to uninterrupted speech and that only emergency matters should cause an interruption.

3. Consider Approval of the June 11th and July 8th, 2013 regular meeting minutes.

Commissioner Baird made a motion to approve the June 11, 2013 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tarin, and the motion carried unanimously. A motion was made by Commissioner Baird to approve the minutes of the July 8, 2013 meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Falkner, and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Citizens to be Heard

No citizens were in attendance, therefore none were heard.

5. Reports: Activities that Impact the Park or Access to the Park

None

B. Discuss: Pocket Parks, Adjoining Trails and Connectivity

Chairman Thomas noted that he had put this item on the agenda as the Commissioners wanted to address this as a part of the review of each park zone. He asked what the definition of a pocket park was and what items were typical for such a park. Staff member Smith stated that she would investigate and let the Commission know at the next meeting.

Commissioner Baird stated that he thought the question should be where in each zone a pocket park could be located, but that he had some trouble getting adequate maps of the area. He noted that he didn't want to wander around the city without a map. Staff member Smith stated that she had maps of each zone prepared that indicated what was city-owned and what areas could be considered for a pocket type park.

Chairman Thomas explained that maps for insertion into the Master Plan had been included in the meeting packet.

C. Review: Park Zones as Discussed at last Park Commission Meeting

Commissioner Baird stated he was looking at Park Zone 2.1 and was wondering what portion was actual parkland. Smith indicated that it was the Shadow Mist parkland, donated by the developer. Chairman Thomas further explained that this property was for use by the residents of Shadow Mist and

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that it abutted San Antonio's proposed Crystal Hills Park. Staff member Smith explained that this area had been earmarked for parking for the proposed Hike & Bike Trail, but was currently being used as a staging area for street projects. Smith stated that the area would be cleaned up and that it could include a pocket park.

Commissioner Fraser asked when the Hike & Bike Trail would be constructed. Smith explained that the tentative timeline was to start construction in 2014.

Commissioner Fraser then asked for an explanation of the map legends, which Ms. Smith did.

D. Discuss: Findings from Commissioner's Preview of Assigned Parkland Zone

Chairman Thomas stated that he had worked up the Park Zone limitations, but that he would like to see the assisted living facility on Huebner Road in Zone 4, included in the plan and have it shown on the map.

Commissioner Fraser then asked about the property that has the two silos on Huebner Road. Chairman Thomas noted that it was located in Zone 3. Staff member Smith explained that the City had just acquired a portion of the property that did not include the silos, but that the portion they did own could be used as a pocket park in the future. She further noted that the City planned to construct a detention pond on the site for now.

Commissioner Tarin asked if the silos were to be restored. Staff member Smith again explained that the city did not own that portion of the property and that the owner had not disclosed any future plans.

Chairman Thomas stated that one of these areas near the trail had been noted by the City Council as a potential site for a future pocket park. He further noted that the existing trail needed some work to widen the area. He stated that the area, located in Zone 3, was slated for more wildflower plantings.

Commissioner Fraser asked if the only public portion was notated in green. Staff member Smith replied that other areas in Zone 3 belonged to the City, but they were not designated as parkland, such as the 60' right of way at the end of Evers Road, between the Linkwood Addition and Pavona Place subdivisions. She noted that the area was large enough to support a pocket park, as well as an improved trail. Commissioner Fraser mentioned that there were the beginnings of a trail already there.

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Chairman Thomas stated that one of the areas Commissioner Stanley had suggested, between the church and the silo property in Zone 4, would be ideal for a pocket park.

Commissioner Fraser asked if there were any other areas. Chairman Thomas stated that Commissioner Stanley had mentioned a road south of John Marshall High School that connected to Bluebird Lane and a nice wooded area on Stebbins Road if it was not privately owned. He noted that the City would be better off considering the Bluebird Lane property.

Chairman Thomas asked what the letter "A" on the map designated. Staff member Smith answered that it was John Marshall High School. Chairman Thomas noted that the City definitely needed a park by the silo property, and also in the corner property at the Huebner-Onion homestead, which is known as the triangle area.

Commissioner Baird asked about the area below El Verde and who owned that portion. Staff member Smith explained that the property was currently owned by Bexar County Flood Control and was to be a portion of the Hike & Bike Trail. Chairman Thomas explained that plans had already been made for the development of that area. Staff member Smith noted that maps of that area had been included in their packet.

Chairman Thomas noted that the area had been planned out, that it would be beautiful when completed, and that it would hopefully be connected to the proposed downtown center area.

Commissioner Fraser asked for more information regarding the downtown center area, specifically the wooded area behind Hobby Lobby and asked if that area was all privately owned. Staff member Smith stated that it was privately owned.

Commissioner Thomas asked if there was still a trailer park in that area, as well as private homes. Smith stated that there was and that there were approximately 270 homes in that area. She explained that population statistics would be included in the 2010 Park and Open Space Master Plan.

Commissioner Fraser asked if the area above the planned town center was privately owned and Smith answered that it was.

Chairman Thomas noted that there were a lot of commercial properties in that area, as well as condominiums between Poss and Grissom and then asked if a pocket park could be located in that area. Commissioner Fraser answered that the area south of Sawyer Road has some undeveloped properties.

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Chairman Thomas asked if there was any single family residential housing in that area. Commissioner Fraser stated that there was some, but most of that land seemed undeveloped.

Chairman Thomas asked if Sawyer Road led to any housing developments. Staff member Smith explained that there was some, but that the road dead ended and behind that was housing in the City of San Antonio. Chairman Thomas suggested that the Commission contact Park Commission ex-Vice Chairman Valerie Flynn to get her opinion of that area.

Chairman Thomas noted that he had reviewed Zone 2 and observed that it was very broken up. Commissioner Baird noted that he had consulted with his former son-in-law in the Fire Department who showed him where to look for possible park land. He noted that the only available land that was city owned was the Shadow Mist parkland.

Staff member Smith suggested that she look for hidden city owned property, such as alleys and easements, like the property behind The Ridge at Leon Valley, which runs along a drainage easement. She noted that any trail developed there could eventually tie into the Hike & Bike Trail at Huebner Creek.

Chairman Thomas expressed his concern that money that was given to the City in lieu of parkland by the developers of The Ridge at Leon Valley obligated the City to install some kind of park in the area. He noted that in the Zone 2, in the Seneca III subdivision, there was a five to ten foot drainage area along Pickering that could be used to develop a trail going back to The Ridge at Leon Valley. He asked if that land was privately owned. Staff member Smith answered that it was.

Commissioner Fraser noted that the large vacant tract of land along Samaritan Drive was owned by two elderly sisters who were currently residing in a nursing home and that they might be inclined to sell the land. Staff member Smith noted that at one time, a developer tried to rezone the property for single family residences, with smaller lots than were in the developed portion of that area, but that the zoning request was denied by City Council. She noted that a portion of that land would have been designated as parkland, as required by the subdivisions code. She further noted that the land to be donated would most probably have been located within the 100 year flood hazard area.

Chairman Thomas noted that he had heard that one area to west of Seneca was currently in a lawsuit with city and that it would not be a good idea to get involved with the property owners at this time.

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Staff member Smith offered to create an additional map for the Park Commission, which would show all city-owned property and could indicate potential pocket park and trail locations.

Chairman Thomas indicated his concern that once the new trail was developed, there would be lots of activity and the City should provide some connectivity between the neighborhoods and the trail, and suggested that the Commission review the area between El Verde Road and Seneca III, for potential connection off Pickering Drive. He noted the City was offered the drainage easement behind Shipley Donuts that could be used as a trail.

Chairman Thomas stated that also located in Zone 2, behind the automotive dealerships was what looked like an alley that could potentially connect the two areas. He suggested the Commission carefully review that area.

Commissioner Fraser noted that it would be great to have a potential parkland overlay map. He further noted that it would be a great tool for negotiating with property owners for future land purchases. Staff member Smith reminded the Commission that the reason the developer gave money for parks in lieu of actual parkland was because there was no suitable area for a park in that subdivision for a reasonable cost.

Chairman Thomas then stated that he had been reviewing Zone 3, and that after that review, he realized that Zone 3 was a huge area. He asked staff if the Commission should consider breaking up the zone to reflect just the park as Zone 3 and then create a Zone 5, for other areas around the park.

Staff member Smith replied that the Commission could configure the zones in any manner they thought reasonable; however, the zones were currently broken down by population needs. She noted that the Commission might want to consider configuring certain areas as depicted by the new maps, for instance area 3.1, 3.2, and so on. Commissioner Fraser agreed, noting that there are very distinct areas within Park to be studied.

E. Discuss: Senior Fitness Center

Chairman Thomas then stated that at one time, the Commission had permission to create an area in Zone 3 for a senior citizen's exercise area, using the areas between Community Center and library, and then also at the Conference Center, due to the numerous sidewalks, stairs and ramps. He explained that the sidewalks would make a nice walking area away from kids, joggers, bicycles, scooters, and skateboarders. He further explained that they had planned on placing an outdoor fitness equipment area behind Community Center, using bicycle type equipment, and that the Commission could review the area now as a place for seniors to walk at almost no cost. He noted that the porches and patios could be used and that new benches and drinking

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fountains could be installed on each patio, and that it would be a sort of "city center" for senior citizens.

Commissioner Fraser asked if anyone had interviewed the Seniors recently to find out what type of equipment and activities they would like to have installed.

Chairman Thomas explained that his vision was to create a sort of rehabilitation center, by using the stairs and ramps at the Conference Centers as an area for use in rehabilitation of injuries. He noted that he had tried to gain the support of the seniors several years ago, but was met with opposition from a former Commission member that was against having any exercise centers in this area, so the Commission was given permission to use an area that was farther away from the facilities than would be ideal.

Staff member Smith noted that as the subject had been brought up at the previous Park Commission meeting, she had tried to investigate the possibilities of such use, but was told that the seniors had indicated they preferred to exercise indoors in the air conditioning. She further noted that she had asked Development Director Kristie Flores for her opinion of the idea, as Mrs. Flores manages both centers, and that Mrs. Flores had some concerns with people using the stairs and ramps of the Conference Center as an exercise trail while the building was in use for conferences and seminars. Ms. Smith indicated her concern regarding the location of the dumpsters at the back of the Community Center and that it might not be conducive to using outdoor exercise equipment, because of potential odors.

Chairman Thomas stated that he would rather they use this area than the Park, as he was afraid that senior citizens using walkers at Raymond Rimkus Park would have to dodge bicyclists and joggers.

Commissioner Fraser noted that he had not seen any persons using walkers at the park, nor had he seen very many bicyclists in two or three weeks. He noted that he had seen numerous walkers and that he agreed this should be reviewed as an option. He also stated his concern with the crosswalk at Evers Road and that if the area was improved, the two areas could be linked.

Chairman Thomas noted that the Evers Road crosswalk was being impeded by overhanging trees and that the trees should be trimmed to Code to make the crossing safer.

Commissioner Fraser suggested that the Commission meet with the Seniors to get a consensus on what amenities should be provided. Chairman Thomas stated that it would not cost a lot to improve the area for the Seniors.

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Chairman Thomas then mentioned that the basketball courts should be improved to make a full court that could be converted to ½ courts. Commissioner Fraser noted that the Commission should go through the area and make a list of what should now be provided at the park.

Commissioner Baird stated that the Commission should take a closer look at creating a senior area at the Community and Conference Centers for the seniors, as it was a very nice area. He stated that his concern was whether or not the area could be protected and whether or not the senior citizens would use the area.

Chairman Thomas noted that the equipment would be similar to the equipment at the trails by the Medical Center. Commissioner Fraser asked staff if they had asked about the equipment or the general use of the area. Staff member Smith replied that Tai Chi was already being practiced at the Library porch. She suggested that the Commission present a detailed proposal with a map or brochure to each of the factions that use or control the centers. She noted she was in possession of very good site plans of that area.

Chairman Thomas noted that he thought grant possibilities for such equipment had been investigated.

F. Discuss: What is Needed to Complete the new Park Master Plan

Chairman Thomas asked staff what the Commission needed to do to next to complete the plan. Staff member Smith explained that the Commission really needed a new map with potential parkland and trails so that they could be incorporated in the plan. She noted that once all the changes had been made from previous Commission suggestions, the Plan could be submitted to the City Council for their approval.

6. Commissioners and Staff Comments

Commissioner Fraser asked staff about the proposed land acquisition near the park. Staff member Smith stated that she was in the process of negotiating a price for the 0.396 acre parcel along the curve of Huebner Creek for stormwater purposes. She showed the Commission the portion of the map where the remaining properties around the park were located and which ones would be adjacent to Raymond Rimkus Park. Commissioner Fraser noted that it would be nice to acquire all the remaining properties to incorporate into the park.

Chairman Thomas explained that the walking path could start at the quiet area in Raymond Rimkus Park and then be developed to end at the Little League field, if the City owned all those properties.

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Commissioner Fraser asked if staff knew the layout of the proposed Hike & Bike Trail. Staff member Smith explained that the design engineer for the project had just been selected and that once a contract had been signed, they would be working on the design and layout of the trail. She noted that a conceptual layout had been developed, but the final design would depend upon the topography of the area, citizen input, and Council approval.

Commissioner Fraser stated that he had concerns with bicyclists using the same trail as walkers or joggers and requested that the existing trail in Raymond Rimkus Park not be incorporated into the proposed Hike & Bike Trail. Commissioner Baird noted that he had been walking on the trail by O.P. Schnabel Park and that he had not been bothered by the bicyclists. Commissioner Fraser expressed his concern with that situation. Staff member Smith explained that any trail to be developed would be ADA accessible, which would require that the trail be at least ten (10') feet wide, accommodating both.

Chairman Thomas expressed his concerns with the materials used for surfacing the proposed trail, wanting better access for senior citizens to visit the Huebner gravesite located in the Huebner-Onion Natural Area Park and to get to the rest of the path. Staff member Smith explained that, because the trail would be located in the flood hazard area, the trail surface must be able to withstand flooding, which would result in a more permanent surface being used.

Commissioner Baird expressed his thanks to the Chairman and to staff for explaining the overall Parks and Open Space Master Plan and providing updated maps.

Commissioner Tarin asked if the two properties by Redbird Lane were privately owned. Staff answered that they were. Mrs. Tarin then asked if it was against the code to drive or walk past the barricades during a flood. Staff recommended that she speak with the Chief of Police to get an answer to her question. Mrs. Tarin commented that there were numerous deer in the Monte Robles Park area. Mrs. Tarin stated that with so many activities at the park, she wished the Park Commission could sell water at the park. Staff answered that she would have to investigate the park rules for an answer.

Chairman Thomas stated that the City had the Park Bucks program, which was advertised with the water bills, but that revenue from that program was very slim. He also commented that a pocket park around the Little League field and possibly a bigger pavilion in that area would be great.

Staff member Smith told the Commission that she would be ordering some name plates for future meetings.

Chairman Thomas noted that two members of the Tree Advisory Board should be from the Park Commission and that he thought that rule was in their by-laws. Staff member Smith informed the Commission that the Tree Advisory Board had requested to hold joint meetings with the Park Commission bi-annually.

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Chairman Thomas stated that he would like to get Commissioner Tarin to work with them as she has a background in gardening, as she was the head of the Garden Club in Forest Oaks.

Staff member Smith indicated that there were several improvements that could be accomplished at the park now, such as replacing table tops and barbecue pits, and repairing surfaces that have cracks.

Commissioner Fraser stated that the basketball goals closest to the tennis court had defective rims that could be easily fixed.

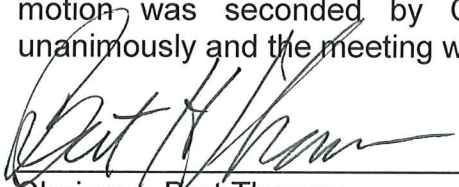
Chairman Thomas mentioned that he would like to see a skateboard park next to the pool area, but that he thought the City would have to increase insurance for that type of facility. Commissioner Fraser noted that there were all sorts of skateboard parks around San Antonio and that Leon Valley could investigate the possibility.

7. Announcements

Chairman Thomas stated that the next Park Commission meeting would be held September 9, 2013, at Leon Valley City Hall, instead of Raymond Rimkus Park.

8. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Commissioner Baird. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Fraser. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 8:58 pm.


Chairman Bert Thomas


Date

Approved by the Park Commission on the 9th day of September, 2013.